

**TOWN OF SHEFFIELD
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
WORKING SESSION
OCTOBER 31, 2014
TOWN HALL
1:30 PM**

Board Members Present: David A. Smith, Jr., Chairman
Nadine A. Hawver, Clerk
Rene C. Wood

Others Present: Rhonda LaBombard, Town Administrator
Alicia Dulin, Assistant to the Town Administrator
Michael Ovitt Treasurer/Collector

Chairman Smith called the meeting to order at 1:30 PM.

TREASURER/COLLECTOR STAFFING:

Michael Ovitt distributed a letter to the Board regarding the temporary part time clerk duties. Chairman Smith asked Mr. Ovitt to point out the highlights of the document for discussion.

Discussion ensued regarding financial software, records retention, lockbox and tax taking. The board asked Mr. Ovitt for a proposed timetable of when some of these tasks will be implemented if the part time clerk's position is not eliminated. Mr. Ovitt stated that he is not sure how to assign a date for the completion of these tasks.

Selectman Wood expressed her frustration with the lack of changes in the Treasurer/Collector Office over the past year. Selectman Hawver stated how difficult it was for her not to support a department head's request. Selectman Wood continued by stating that she cannot support things staying the same. She has asked several times for financial reports which she has not received.

Selectman Hawver asked how much staff time it will take to get the records room and office organized. Mr. Ovitt stated that he cannot answer any more questions and left the meeting.

Discussion ensued regarding a performance plan with goals for the Treasurer/Collector. It was the consensus of the Board to uphold the prior vote to eliminate the temporary part time clerk's position in the Treasurer/Collector Office effective December 31, 2014.

RESPONSE TO SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT LETTER:

Discussion ensued regarding the School Committee's vote to close the outlying schools and a response to the Superintendent's letter. It was the consensus of the Board to have Selectman Wood draft a letter to the Superintendent regarding the closure of the outlying schools, attendance and financial thresholds even though the School Committee already took the vote on the closure of the outlying schools.

ROUTE 7A BRIDGE:

Administrator LaBombard asked the Board if they would like to invite MassDOT to a meeting to talk about the Route 7A Bridge closure. It was the consensus of the Board to invite Peter Niles from MassDOT to a meeting to discuss the Route 7A bridge closure.

SOLAR PROJECTS – BERKSHIRE SCHOOL SOLAR – LIME KILN ROAD:

Administrator LaBombard asked the Board if they would like to move forward with the PILOT solar agreement for Berkshire School or wait until the back taxes have been paid. It was the consensus of the Board to not move forward with an agreement until the back taxes have been paid. Discussion ensued regarding how to deal with the issue of back taxes. Selectman Wood moved to authorize Kopelman and Paige be hired to deal with the issue of back taxes for the Berkshire School solar farm for an amount not to exceed \$5,000, seconded by Selectman Hawver. The motion carried unanimously. It was the consensus of the Board to have Administrator LaBombard send a letter to Power Play Solar stating that there will be no agreement or negotiations for a PILOT solar agreement until all of back taxes are paid.

Discussion ensued regarding a discounted PILOT solar agreement for the Lime Kiln Road project. Selectman Wood stated that she is not in favor of a discount on this agreement. Selectman Hawver stated that she does not feel comfortable offering a discount to one but not the other. It was the consensus of the Board to send a letter stating that the Board is still investigating a few details and will get back to them in two weeks.

POLICE DEPARTMENT RESERVE INTERMITTENT OFFICERS:

Administrator LaBombard explained that a Reserve Intermittent Police Officer has resigned and stated that Chief Munson has asked to put an ad out to hire more. She stated that the ad calls for any officers applying to be able to pass the agility test. Selectman Hawver suggested that Administrator LaBombard talk to Chief Munson regarding having part time police officers now that can't pass the agility test. Discussion ensued. It was the consensus of the Board to have Administrator LaBombard tell Chief Munson that either all officers including ones who already work at the department can pass the agility test or none of them have to.

CONSTELLATION – ELECTRIC:

Administrator LaBombard explained that Constellation Energy has offered the Town a lower rate than Colonial Power and recommended that the Town sign a contract with Constellation Energy. Selectman Wood moved to sign a contract with constellation Energy for the Town's power, seconded by Selectman Hawver. The motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC OFFICIALS BACK WAGES LIMIT – MIA:

Administrator LaBombard explained that the Town's insurance company is recommending an increase in our back wages insurance from \$50,000 to \$100,000. Administrator LaBombard stated that she does not feel this is necessary. It was the consensus of the Board not to increase the insurance for back wages.

CEMETARY COMMISSION:

Administrator LaBombard asked if there was any interest in forming a Cemetery Commission. Discussion ensued. It was the consensus of the Board to have Administrator LaBombard prepare a warrant article to establish a three person Cemetery Commission for the Annual Town Meeting

RECORDING MINUTES:

Administrator LaBombard stated that Selectman Hawver had suggested recording the minutes of all Boards and Committees. Selectman Hawver stated that she felt it would be useful to record the minutes so when there is a question of substance of the minutes the clerks would be able to refer to the recording. It was the consensus of the Board to have Administrator LaBombard find out if recorded minutes can be destroyed after the written minutes have been approved and then discuss at a future meeting. Selectman Wood stated that CTSB now has all meetings available to watch on their website and asked if a link to CTSB's meetings could be put on the Town's website.

Selectman Hawver recused herself from the Senior Center Director discussion because of the possibility of a conflict of interest.

Discussion ensued regarding the offer that has been made to John Arthur Miller for the full time Senior Center Director position and how much time is appropriate to wait for an answer. Selectman Wood moved to contact John Arthur Miller and ask him when he will be able to provide an answer and if he does not answer, tell him he has one week to answer, seconded by Chairman Smith. The motion carried 2-0. Selectman Hawver abstained.

Selectman Wood moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Selectman Hawver. The motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Smith adjourned the meeting at 3:00 PM

Respectfully submitted:

Alicia Dulin
Assistant to Town Administrator

Documents reviewed at this meeting:
Temporary Treasurer/Collector Clerk Functions
E-mail form Town Counsel Regarding Solar Tax Agreements
Police Department Help Wanted Ad